Performance of Bhilai Steel Plant

3364. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Bhilai Steel Plant of the Steel Authority of India Limited has been adjudged as the best integrated steel plant in the country during the year 1992-93 and whether this plant has maintained the same performance during the year 1993-94;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that due to the best performance of the plant Prime Minister has stressed that there is need for this plant to enter the phase of State of the Art technology and bring in maximum benefit to the country as well as international standard; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken by Government to bring the product of this plant to the international standard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During 1993-94 Bhilai Steel has maintained and improved its performance over 1992-93 in relation to most of the physical parameters such as capacity utilisation, growth in production, efficiency of operations export performance etc.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) In order to upgrade the technology and the products of this plant to international standards the following steps are being taken:

(i) Introduction of taller ovens and Partial Briquetting of coal charge.

(ii) Modernisation of Blast Furnaces.

(iii) Introduction of secondary refining and continuous casting.

(iv) Modernistion of Rolling Mills—Rail and Structural Mill and Wire Rod Mill.

(v) Improved work practices.

Supply of Cocking Coal to Sail

3365. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) is not getting adequate amount of coking coal of acceptable quality;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in order to alleviate this inadequacy the Steel Authority of India is considering certain strategic options to improve the supply by floating joint ventures in the country and abroad to meet its requirement;

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(d) what measures Government propose to take to overcome the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (d) It is a fact that Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) is not getting adequate amount of cocking coal of acceptable quality from indigenous sources. The ash content of the coal is higher in the supplies from CIL sources. The quantitative and qualitative shortage is to be met by SAIL by resorting to imports.

SAIL is exploring joint ventures in India for setting up coal washeries for which discussions are being held with the concerned parties, including Coal India Limited. Government also takes up issues relating to quantity and quality of coal supplies periodically, on behalf of SAIL, with Ministry of Coal.

Vizag Steel Plant

3366. SHRIMATI SARALA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the steel making capacity of Vizag plant is over-rated;

(b) whether it is a fact that steel making capacity is not matching with liquid steel production in the upstream unit in blast furnaces and rolling capacity in the downstream units;

(c) what was the liquid steel and saleable steel production in terms of capacity utilisation vis a vis hot metal production in Vizag steel plant in 1993-94 and what are the corresponding figures for SAIL; and